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ABSTRACT

Teaching models, derived from theory and research, are static, and lack responsibility. Models substitute an abstracted notion for teachers. Literature can be viewed as a field of play, where meaning opens, rather than as a body of knowledge. The teacher's challenge consists of posing questions that allow students to formulate their takes on a text, constructing opportunities for students to critically exchange their takes, and posing questions that encourage self-reflexive readings of the offered takes. In one 12-week sequence of assignments, students worked from two short stories and an interview and completed four writing assignments (plus two revisions for each writing assignment). The sequence was designed to let students share interpretations from challenging readings and take a critical stance towards the readings and interpretations. Some examples from the students' writings show their struggles with their close readings. The use of multiple texts and assignments allows students to posit meaning in a continuous but bounded field of play. By contrast, teaching models treat knowledge as objects rather than discursive practices, and turn discussions of theory and practice into debates over which is the right or true pedagogical model. (Samples of student writings are included; 20 references are attached.) (SG)

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TO TEACH (LITERATURE)?

Anthony Petrosky
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Part I
Prologue:A Brief Argument Against Teaching Models

Problem-posing education, as a humanist and liberating praxis, posits as fundamental that men subjected to domination must fight for their emancipation. To that end, it enables teachers and students to become subjects of the educational process by overcoming authoritarianism and an alienating intellectualism; it also enables men to overcome their false perception of reality. The world--no longer something to be described with deceptive words--becomes the object of that transforming action by men which results in their humanization.

Paulo Freire
The Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Men were not intended to work with the accuracy of tools, to be precise and perfect in all their actions...if you will make a man of the working creature, you cannot make a tool. Let him but begin to imagine, to think, to try to do anything worth doing; and the engine-turned precision is lost at once. Out come all his roughness, all his dullness, all his incapability; shame upon shame, failure upon failure, pause after pause...

John Ruskin
The Nature of Gothic

Re-vision--the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction--is for women more than a chapter in culture history: it is an act of survival. Until we can understand the assumptions in which we are drenched we cannot know ourselves.

I have hesitated to do what I am going to do now, which is use myself as an illustration. For one thing, it's a lot easier and less dangerous to talk about others.

Adrienne Rich
When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision

Adrienne Rich is speaking to and about women; it appears that Freire and Ruskin are speaking to and about men, and their exclusion of women is painfully obvious. So to begin, I would like to draw attention to this problem, because it will reoccur later in this paper in a different context, and I would also like to proceed by suggesting the transformation of men and women in these passages into "people," so I might then put the emphasis on a human drama that includes issues of gender and, for my argument, issues of transformation and enactment where, as we'll see later, I, as a teacher, become a subject as Rich does for her study of her own writing.

It's necessary to do this, because the very concept of "teaching models" (those replicable structures of how to teach in particular ways) displace one of the subjects of teaching, the teacher, and replace her with an abstracted notion, a model derived from theory or research, of what ought to go on in classrooms. Models, derived from theory and research, informed sometimes by practice, are presented in a discourse at once removed from the theories that bear responsibility for their construction and also from those who created them, because as "models," they are allowed to exist in a space estranged from their derivers and attributable to others, to the theorists and researchers. Models, in other words, lack responsibility--their successes and failures, too, are always attributable to others, to those who adopt or use them; and although this is unsettling it is also symptomatic of a larger problem that involves the relationships of theory and practice and who is allowed to enact those relationships.

Let me cycle back. Teaching is a human drama, not a mechanical device, not a static space, as models force it to be, because it involves people interacting with people. But who are the subjects of teaching? We tend to think of the students as subjects, and this is only partly correct. Teachers are also the subjects of teaching, and traditionally they have not been allowed to establish and enact and assess the links between theory and practice; instead, they have been offered (and continue to be offered) teaching models, structures, and schematics that can be replicated no matter what the teachers' understandings of teaching and learning might be, no matter what their students might be like, and no matter what their agendas, their intentions, might be. Teaching models--the worst of which are lock-stepped in unalterable sequences like Madeline Hunter's Mastery Teaching (1984)[1], or the chapter-by-chapter study of novels (and the subsequent testing of students' recall of chapters) which seem so prevalent in schools, or the still strictly restrained instructional approach defined by the language of plot, character, and setting[2]--erase possibilities rather than create them by linking "individuals to certain types of utterances while consequently barring them from all others," (Foucault, 1972, p. 226) effectively removing teachers and students from possibilities outside of the model. And models, as versions of doctrines, are always already embedded in the discourse of the monolithic, the univocal, because their validity is defined by their ability to unify and rationalize. They have in the past led to and been responsible for teaching being reduced to formulas which in turn are reproduced in textbooks, teacher-proof materials, and tests. Models, especially when they propose that they represent "right" or "true" ways of teaching, are strictly exclusionary, unlike local strategies (i.e., posing problems, initiating discussions, designing writing assignments or projects, etc.) which are context-variable and can be inscribed in dialogues, in interactive learning, with colleagues and students. Models shut down the field of play (which is already bounded by the theories and histories and intentions of the players) that involves teachers as well as students, and they make re-visualizing and rethinking difficult if not impossible. The very concept of models of teaching literature, in other words, encloses itself in a Mobius strip from which it can't escape. And this is the "teaching model circle" that I would like to disrupt by proposing, as John Dewey once did[3], that the link between theory and practice is one that must be recreated over and over again by individual teachers in concert with colleagues, including students. I would like this project, the one that includes this prologue and what I will call "The Original Paper" and its epilogue, to stand as an example of one teacher's enactment of these links between theory and practice, an enactment marked by puzzling and transforming notions of teaching and learning constructed from an understanding, however mistaken and incomplete, of particular aspects of postmodern critical theory.

But before going on to the report, "The Original Paper," of this semester's long enactment of theory in practice, let me further explore this argument that places the responsibility for the enactment with teachers and implies, I think, a sense of irreplicability (except, perhaps, in a most global way) and a shying away from models that locate the subject of teaching in a thing, a procedure, rather than in a person asking questions about how particular theories, whether they're literary or psychological or linguistic, might inform teaching and, then, a changing "consciousness" of teaching and learning. This stance, one that interrogates theories for what they might be brought to say about teaching and learning, is not a given in theoretical study and is particular to teachers, for it is quite likely that unless these questions are being asked of theory, the teaching of theory will proceed as the dominant notions of knowledge allow it--as transfer and acquisition--in what Freire refers to as the "banking concept of education."[4] The theory is delivered, in other words, from the theoretician (or the theory's interpreter) to the student of theory the way peas are put in a bowl without consideration for how this theory (in the case here, postmodern critical theory) might be brought to bear on questions of pedagogy. This is an important distinction, because it begins to define the space in which teachers can interrogate theory--one not likely to be occupied by theoreticians (or other students of theory) who approach theoretical work as a body of knowledge to be mastered and interrogated in a conversation that proceeds primarily by relating it to other theoretical work.

So throughout this report, especially in the section to follow called "The Original Paper," my posture (at least the one I intend) is that of a teacher grappling with and trying to enact a pedagogy derived from my questioning particular writings of Roland Barthes (1977), Jacques Derrida (1970, 1976), Julia Kristeva (1986), Michel Foucault (1972), and Edward Said (1975) -- a questioning that has gone on (and continues to go on) for a number of years and spills over into other projects. I begin by positioning Barthes and Derrida against E.D. Hirsch (1988) not as a simplistic representation of the field, but to create a "thinking machine" posited between these poles, a dichotomy that allows me to generate an argument between oppositions. And it's an argument that I find compelling, one that allows me to locate the kinds of rote learning and drill, including the regurgitation of received knowledge, that I observe in teaching in my children's schools and in my university, in a space occupied also by Hirsch who over-defines himself by his insistence on iterating necessary knowledge through a dictionary or lexicon without much attention to pedagogical method. When Hirsch does turn to pedagogy, he takes a position commensurate with his views of knowledge and situates acts of interpretation, whether they are students' or critics', in a narrow field defined by a quest for intended meanings. On the other hand, this "thinking machine" (a term for which I thank Ellen Bishop, a graduate student in our English Department) allows me to situate Barthes and Derrida (and Said's shadow) in a pedagogical space defined by its dedication to multiplicity, to a field of play that opens literature and interpretations to close readings through various lenses, particularly those offered through self-reflexivity in language and discourse. And I'm interested in how my teaching of literature might for us - for my students and myself - open "a field of possible options" and enable even "various mutually exclusive architectures to appear side by side or in turn" (Foucault, 1972, p. 66) in our writings about and discussions of literary selections. I'm particularly interested in understanding the classroom as a space where a multiplicity of interpretations might exist in a tentativeness open to examination and re-examination from multiple perspectives, including those offered by postmodern literary and language theory.

This seems intriguing to me because a place to play with multiplicity is never without knowledge, for interpretive activities with groups of students always proceed from texts, wheth-

er they're written or visual or oral, but the opposite case is not so. Rote learning and referential knowledge (of which I am positioning Hirsch as a representative) do not often involve interpretation (with the exception, of course, of the retelling of received ones and the quest for intended meanings), especially as they're used in the schools and turned into such things as prescribed curriculum content that must be covered on exercise sheets of multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions that teach and assess the retelling of received notions. Adjacent to this sense in which knowledge is always present (and usually well-remembered) in interpretive activities is the sense that it's not just knowledge about literature that these activities teach but that they also teach ways of working, methods. For interpretive activities that occur in a space which allows for multiplicity, for multiple points of view, is also a space that encourages the study of a multiplicity of readings and methods. The scope of learning here, as compared to the scope offered by the space occupied by a representative Hirsch, is both large and particular; it includes not only knowledge but also the presentation and study of multiple readings and methods. And it has as one of its "possible options," the study and understanding of the positions of the subjects involved in the field of play, for the teacher and the students are always situated in beliefs and identities which are at once ideological and political. When we begin with the premise of examining assumptions and points of view, we offer to reveal ourselves and the workings of interpretation, and I value this for the effects it can have on ideology and politics. We also open up a multivocal field of play (as opposed to the one narrowly defined by Hirsch's claims for knowledge and intended meanings, and as opposed to the Derridian field of endless free play, which is impossible unless we're willing to abdicate the notion that subjects are always situated in beliefs and values and are not, therefore, free). We undertake, in other words:

> To make explicit what is usually allowed to remain implicit; to state that which, because of professional consensus, is ordinarily not stated or questioned; to begin again rather than to take up writing dutifully at a designated point and in a way ordained by tradition; above all, to write in and as an act of discovery rather than out of respectful obedience to established "truth"--these add up to the production of knowledge... (Said, 1975, p. 379)

The field of play is always bounded and never free, yet it offers, more than any teaching model could (because the teaching models are exclusionary and "truth" oriented) the possibility of self-knowledge and opportunities to "see" through and with various methods of engaging and interpreting texts. The field evolves for teachers, I think, from their continual engagement with theory, for theory creates stress that can fracture static traditions and methods even if it does not directly inform pedagogy and serves only as a catalyst for a change of "consciousness"--a transformation of the teacher, a subject, that might then inform pedagogy and intentions.

Let me turn now to a discussion of my methods. This prologue was written after "The Original Paper," which you are about to read, at the same time the epilogue was written. Both were done in response to reviewers' comments and to my rethinking from additional reading and writing. And since I have all along wanted to present myself as a teacher enacting a position that eschews teaching models in favor of teaching strategies (like questioning, discussing, writing, and working on projects) and individual experiments and personal reports, I haven't revised "The Original Paper," which I see as a personal report, except for editorial matters. This prologue and the epilogue that follows the paper are, then, further digressions in the conversation, points of departure in part made possible by reviewers' comments and in part by my own

rethinking a year later of that semester's worth of teaching I represent in "The Original Paper".

You should expect the opening section of "The Original Paper," the section where I begin the discussion of the theory that informs the activities and choices I make with my class, to be difficult to follow. The sentences are long and, as one of the reviewers said, perhaps the result of the "stress of theory," a tension which I take to be necessary. The theory I interrogate for pedagogy is difficult, my understandings of it hopelessly flawed and incomplete, and the long rambling sentences are an indication of this. "You can see Tony piling on clauses," my friend David Bartholomae once said of my writing in a similar situation, "desperate to figure out what the hell he is doing." And while I think this is so, this isn't meant as an apology or a moment of self-indulgence where you have to watch me fumble through a process, but as an indication of what happened when I set about "seeing" theory in practice. The epigraph from Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye (1964) is meant to set the tone for this kind of enterprise, and it was intriguing for me to read my reviewers' comments, asking, as they did, for unification and simplification, for a clear message about my theory's instructional implications, in light of the epigraph from Catcher which is critical of requests for unification and simplification. These kinds of comments are outside the scope of the problem I set for myself and they define, I think, another problem, one that would reduce this kind of project to a unified whole with a "single central logos," the one that I am critical of when I criticize teaching models and approaches. I could have gone back to "The Original Paper" and fixed it up; it could have been clarified and summarized, brought closer to being seamless, but my intentions differ here, and I want to keep this discussion open. I want the cracks, as Georges Bataille (1988) calls them, and the contradictions, the disruptions, to be visible, to invite the readers of this piece to speak back, to speak with or from or against, but to speak, for nods of agreement (or disapproval) allow the not-ordinarily-stated position of readers to remain silent. And there is a discourse--the one of seamless models and prose, the one with neat and tidy conclusions, that shuts down conversations and topics through its structures, through its seamlessness, its monolithicness, its apparent validity and presentations of perfections or truths for consumption rather than for interrogation or discussion--whose dispersion I want to elucidate while, at the same time, it wants to construct me and this paper.

> True theory, says Deleuze, does not totalize, it multiplies. Instead of reducing phenomena to corresponding ideas, theory releases phenomena and experience from the limitations of having happened. Theory does not contain, envelop, or aggrandize experience and knowledge, and neither does it hand them on in the form of processed truth. Theory assumes the evident irregularity and discontinuity of knowledge--and hence its lack of a single central logos--but goes on to elucidate or to produce the order of dispersion in which knowledge takes place. (Said, 1975, p. 5)

So it seems to me that when we speak about empowering teachers, we are talking about responsibilities too--the responsibilities to interrogate theory for teaching and to then engage in critical conversations with our colleagues about our personal reports of those interrogations and those enactments that might follow from them. This kind of theorizing about teaching and learning is closer to what Deleuze points to than collections of teaching approaches and models which have, I think, not only failed us in the past but sent us off posing and trying to solve the wrong problems--the ones framed in the teaching model Mobius strip and the search for the "right" pedagogy.

You should also expect to read long excerpts from my students' writing. It's possible for me to somewhat create the class conversations, but in a study of dialogues that involve interpretations, we need more than that, and the simple "flavor" of a piece of writing (as one of the readers put it) isn't enough. You need to see as much of what I saw as is possible to present in a paper (and still keep it readable) to enable you to think not only about my claims but also about the things I miss and can't see. And you also need to be attuned to my mistakes, to missed opportunities, to contradictions and inattentions, for as much as their opposites are involved in teaching, so are they.

In the epilogue I'll discuss these mistakes and missed opportunities in more detail, and a number are already discussed in "The Original Paper," but you might want to question from the start, as one of the readers did, why female points of view aren't represented in the reading selections, and why the conversations didn't turn to those matters during our discussions of students' papers. Why, I asked myself as I rethought this paper and the sequence of assignments from which it proceeds, did I construct a situation that asked my students to try to enter a field of play so bounded by my obsessions with questions of love and father-son relationships from male perspectives? I want to problematize this before hand, before you read the paper and the epilogue, so I might move there later as a way of beginning to understand my role as a subject in this field and how that subjectness, saturated as it is with a particular history, plays into the play.

Part II

The Original Paper: TO TEACH (LITERATURE)?

> "Holden...One short, faintly stuffy, pedagogical question. Don't you think there's a time and place for everything? Don't you think if someone starts out to tell you about his father's farm, he should stick to his guns, then get around to telling you about his uncle's brace? Or, if his uncle's brace is such a provocative subject, shouldn't he have selected it in the first place as his subject--not the farm?"
>
> "Yes--I don't know. I guess he should. I mean I guess he should. I mean I guess he should've picked his uncle as the subject, instead of the farm, if that interested him most. But what I mean is, lots of time you don't know what interests you until you start talking about something that doesn't interest you most. I mean you can't help it sometimes. What I think is, you're supposed to leave somebody alone if he's at least being interesting and he's getting all excited about something. I like it when somebody gets excited about something. It's nice. You just don't know this teacher, Mr. Vinson. He could drive you crazy sometimes, him and the goddam class. I mean he'd keep telling you to unify and simplify all the time. Somethings you just can't do that to. I mean you can't hardly ever simplify and unify something just because somebody wants you to. You didn't know this guy, Mr. Vinson. I mean he was very intelligent and all, but you could tell he didn't have too much brains.
>
> Mr. Antolini and Holden Caulfield, The Catcher in the Rye

Holden's position, in response to Mr. Antolini's pedagogical question, questions the educational enterprise of his schooling, the enterprise of conformity, the one that insists on language learning and use "as series of one way interactions with no reciprocity and all the authority coming from the top down" (Bishop, 1988, p. 6). Mr. Antolini and Mr. Vinson both embrace a monologic paradigm; they would like Holden to know ahead of time where he's going, and to stick to his course once he has embarked. "Holden had the wit to know and be able to say to Mr. Antolini that you don't always know what you're interested in until you run into what you're not interested in. He also had the awareness to sense that the process of discovering what you are interested in, what does matter to you, is something that you can discover in the process of telling stories" (Bishop, 1988, p. 6).

Holden, for all his lack of language and certainty, knows (without being aware that he knows) that everyone had "a backside they can't see...that no one is omniscient, all seeing, all knowing" (Bishop, 1988, p. 6), and that the notion of thinking and communicating as simplification and unification is naive and quite impossibly done simply at another's request, although, of course, we all know that it is requested and done frequently in literature classes, but I will argue later, at the expense of opening up, as opposed to shutting down, interpretations and discussions. Requests for simplification and unification can be read, then, I would propose, as monologic strategies, strategies, that is, that honor singularity rather than multiplicity, that favor the monologic rather than the dialogic, the well-made and documented position that begins with and comes to a point, rather than the exploratory narrative inscribed by and with other narratives, conducted with self-reflexivity and attention to multiple perspectives, including those,

like Holden's, that emerge from and fracture singular subjects or monologues (learning what interests you, for instance, by digressing to what doesn't).

Holden's insight offers an opportunity to ask questions about this subject, literature, including whether it is a subject, at least in the Hirschian sense of it as a body of knowledge about literature[5], or whether it is a field of play (in the sense that the field, whether occupied by one or many, is open - under the influence of imagination - rather than closed - under the influence of rationalization only) that might be said to take literature as one of its subjects, and the language and histories of the people playing as the others (all of which, of course, are inscribed in cultural values and beliefs). In other words, does "to teach literature" circumscribe a subject or a field of play where languages, grounded in various personal and social histories, interweave, digress and turn back on each other?

In the second sense of the question, the posture that proposes literature study (and, of course, writing) as a field of play, engagement with a text is not a search for its meaning, but a disentanglement, a following of the threads and terms it both sets up and transgresses, at various levels from various perspectives. As Barthes (1977) puts it,

> In the multiplicity of writing, everything is to be disentangled, nothing deciphered; the structure can be followed, a 'run' (like the thread of a stocking) at every point and at every level, but there is nothing beneath; writing ceaselessly posits meaning ceaselessly to evaporate it, carrying out a systematic exemption of meaning. (p. 147)

It is this posture that offers literature study as a field of play that seems to me to hold at least the promise of offering students the opportunities to do what we teachers do with texts and to, at the same time, offer writing and discussion as ways to think and rethink perspectives and takes on texts.

There is also the question of various contexts. Would we say, then, that "to teach literature" with elementary school students means what it means to teach literature with high school or college or graduate school students? How does "to teach literature" exist within various contexts? Do both (purposely polarized) views, the one that offers "to teach literature" as a body of knowledge about literature and the one that offers it as a field of play, permutate or change or evolve in consideration of various and diverse contexts, not just in what language or texts might be considered "appropriate" in these various contexts, but in the strategies offered or the opportunities available in the various contexts (i.e., elementary students or college students)? Or might it be that "to teach literature" is monolithic, varying only by texts or languages, maintaining consistent strategies for "to know" or "to interpret" no matter what the contexts?

These important questions and issues frame my proposal for considering "to teach literature" as a field of play, as opposed to considering it a body of knowledge or information about literature as Hirsch would argue (for no matter how he might be willing to consider "to teach" in a classroom, his position is solidified by his insistence on referencing literacy to a dictionary of knowledge and information about literature)[6]. This needs to be clear, because, and paradoxically, my proposal for opening up the study of literature as a field of play, as a place where meaning opens rather than closes, puts an initial premium on students' interpretations of texts, interpretations that, given this place and time in history, will almost always proceed from monologic readings of texts, readings that place students in the position of arguing through

documentation and closure for a specific interpretation or take on a text. It is as if the vehicles of pedagogy were scaffolded--in Vygotsky's sense of directing a child's or student's attention in fruitful ways through questions and tasks that work towards not just learning but a self-consciousness or self-reflexivity about the learning (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 126)[7]--and in order to disentangle, rather than decipher, texts, we first use the language of deciphering, a language that allows us to shape interpretations from a certain perspective, but, at the same time, a language that catches us up in monologic moves, including the use of close readings for evidence and the use of conclusions or closure for, as we say, making the point.

Simply put, the notion of scaffolding allows us to imagine that in order for a novice (a college or high school student is the appropriate example here) to enter the field of play with a text, she first formulates an interpretation that evolves monologically (given her almost inevitable location in logocentric academic discourse) by assuming a deciphering posture, a posture that will become inimical to the ranging and playing among perspectives or takes once other interpretations are brought forward, either from her individual reading and rereading or by a group of people reading and rereading in light of each other's interpretations.

The teacher's problem in opening up "to teach literature" as a field of play is a multifaceted one of posing questions that might allow students to formulate their takes on a text, constructing opportunities for students to critically exchange their takes, and then posing questions that beg self-reflexive readings of the already offered takes on the text (perhaps by drawing attention to the language, especially to the metaphors, of students' written or spoken readings for what they might be said to say about their assumptions and beliefs).

This opening up begins, then, with students either writing or discussing (or both) their interpretations of texts. How this might proceed depends in large part on the text at hand and the questions that it might be said to open up and close down. It is in this sense, that the procedures depend in large part on the text at hand, that response heuristics (like Bleich's[8], for instance) formulate and privilege one way of reading, one way of constructing a take on a text. To open a field of play with a text, a multiplicity of readings enables the fracturing of individual readings and establishes the possibilities of self-reflexive rereadings of the text and of the individual interpretations of it. There are, then, no initial generic problems or questions for texts, except perhaps for the question that asks students to say what strikes them as significant in their readings, but even that question takes its cue from the text at hand, and the teacher's (or the students', if they are fortunate enough to be posing their own problems) immediate take with a text is to formulate the questions that offer students (and the teacher, hopefully) the opportunities to engage the text and each other in disentangling the problems and assumptions posed by or through it.

If this opening up is phrased in terms of general teacherly moves, the question or problem posed for students proceeds to offer them opportunities to learn first how to form their readings, their interpretations or takes on a text, and then how to critically exchange those interpretations, and finally how to self-reflexively trace and reread the text and their interpretations of it by paying attention to the ideology and the language of the text and their interpretations of it, including, too, the questions posed for the text by themselves or by the teacher. None of the elements of this scaffolding are easy, especially since they aggressively push against conventional, received notions of literature studies and the various heuristics, including such heuristics as the conventions of plot and theme, that prescribe single, monolithic readings of

texts. Students in high school and college generally aren't prepared to even formulate their own interpretations of texts, and very few of them are exposed to environments where they might be encouraged to critically exchange those either written or spoken interpretations, but the place to begin is with their readings of texts, and writing offers a retraceable track which is, I would argue, a necessity for carrying out this proposal.

Notions of Sequences and Assignments That Pose Projects for Students

To turn literature study into a field of play where the locus of attention shifts among the various texts--the interpretations or moments or passages, critical readings of those interpretations and the texts, and reflexive rereadings of all the texts in play (the written story or poem, the students' interpretations, the comments on those interpretations, and the comments on those comments) is not an easy proposal, although we have been working with it in the form of project-posing sequences of reading and writing assignments for about ten years at the University of Pittsburgh[9]. Sequences can take many forms, but their common characteristic is that they take nominal subjects like "Growth and Change in Adolescence," or they pose problems like "What Are We Talking About When We Talk About Love?" through series of reading and writing assignments that build on and play off of each other. The twelve week long sequence, "What Are We Talking About When We Talk About Love," which I'll draw my examples from, works with three texts (two short stories and an interview) and four writing assignments (and eight revisions--two for each writing assignment). The first three assignments invite students to comment on what different people talk about when they talk about love. In two stories and an interview, several very different characters confront the difficult subject of love. The characters in the Raymond Carver story ("What We Talk About When We Talk About Love") talk directly about love, yet they seem to be stuck and their conversation is elusive. Ted and Ellie Graziano (from the interview with them by Thomas Cottle) hardly ever talk about love, but they act out an argument that might be said to say very much about it. The third story ("A Silver Dish" by Saul Bellow) brings forward another enactment of love, this time through the eyes of a son who has just buried his father. The fourth and final assignment asks students to conclude their project about what people talk about when they talk about love by taking a critical stance towards the people they have studied and what they, the students, have said.

Although this sequence was designed to give students opportunities to share interpretations from challenging and puzzling readings and to then take a critical stance towards those readings and their interpretations, various sequences can be designed to give students various opportunities. A common move in our sequences is to ask students to see an ideology or perspective on a problem through another ideology or perspective. They might be asked, for example, to read a psychologist's notions of "entitlements" (those personal, social, and financial traits of children of wealthy parents) through the self-reflexive perspective of a young black man in prison for murder. They might also be asked to see the notion through their own experiences, or through others' perspectives. The move here, no matter how many takes on it are available, is to see through other readings or perspectives. The move in the sequence on love is to construct perspectives from puzzling readings, and to then critically and self-reflexively read those perspectives.

All of this happens, of course, in the contexts of certain kinds of academic discourse which privileges logical, documented arguments, inscribed in a quasi-legal code of

proofs--cases, arguments, evidence, and conclusions; and the paradox, as I mentioned earlier, is that this kind of writing becomes the beginning move for later self-reflexive moves inimical to, or at least critical of, univocal monologues, although there is a sense (partly because of the exclusive logocentric tradition of academic discourse and partly because of the monologic discourse of essays) in which no degree of self-reflexivity or no number of readers or players in the field can actually displace the logocentric and monologic nature of these interpretations. The most interesting and hopeful situation is one where students' interpretations proceed univocally but under constant pressure from other interpretations and from self-reflexive rereadings. And, of course, this location in a certain kind of academic discourse can be turned into a problem in the workings of a sequence by asking students to examine their methods and procedures, their language and its metaphors for what it assumes, implies, or privileges from various perspectives such as feminism or deconstruction. The field of play can shift and expand in multiple directions once students learn the initial move of forming their own interpretations. Those interpretations become, then, the material for play, along with the stories, and later, too, along with critical, self-reflexive readings that can pay attention to the way language and cultural forces construct or enter into constructions of interpretive takes.

The advantage of working with multiple texts and assignments in a sequence is that the project presents multiple interpretive problems around a nominal theme by putting students in the position of positing meaning "to evaporate it" in a continuing, yet bounded field of play. Although much of this play is carried in writing assignments, a substantial part of it has to be sustained in conversations, in class discussions where the locus of attention gradually shifts from individual interpretations to a multiplicity of disentanglings, including those defined by individual subjects' situations and those defined by culture and language. The teacherly role is then one of question posing and tracking the conversations and the reposing of critical and self-reflexive questions for students to interpret their own and others' interpretations, so they might learn about the text and themselves and the forces at play in their constructions.

Let me turn to some examples of assignments and students' writings. Here's the first assignment (for the Carver story) from the love sequence. It poses the opening question and frames the overall project.

> It's possible to read this story a number of times and still keep asking, "What are these people talking about? How do they explain love?" Terri, Mel, Laura, and Nick all make a number of observations, but they never seem to reach any conclusions or agreements, and the precise nature of their disagreements is elusive. At the same time, it's possible to feel that much has been said here. The question, then, is what do they talk about when they talk about love?
>
> Write an essay in which you address these questions. What is love to each of these people? What are they trying to say to each other about it?

For the freshmen and sophomores in my classes where I used this sequence, this was an enormous problem, located, for them, as they say, "in the fact that there aren't any answers in the story." They are accustomed to deciphering stories and essays for such things as main ideas and plots and themes, and suddenly, after years of this locating and deciphering, they're faced with forming an interpretation, with constructing a reading in a space occupied by the text, their situations, language, and cultural forces. Generally, they proceed logocentrically, hunting for evidence to make what might be called "legalistic cases" based on hard evidence from the

text, and a common move in this case-making is their claim that something in the text, like a passage or a piece of dialogue, "shows that" or "proves" a claim or point of view is accurate or true. Mike, for example, makes that move towards the end of his paper, which we'll see in a moment, right before his final quote from the Carver story.

Mike's paper is particularly interesting on a number of accounts. He begins by making strong claims that he can never pin-down an equation for love, a position he reiterates throughout the paper, although he then proceeds to develop a case for whose love, Nick's or Laura's or Mel's or Terri's, will survive, a personal relations problem, rather than a text or writing problem, not posed by the assignment, but one which clearly interests Mike and, I think, serves his strong inclination to read for a point, in this case a judgment, beyond the disentangling of who might be said to be saying what about love. Here's Mike's paper:

> Talking about love, or trying to set it within definite parameters, is in my opinion, impossible. There isn't an equation that equals love, and there are few constants. I thought about these things as I read Raymond Carver's short story, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love."
>
> Each of the characters in the story have their own idea of what love is, or what it should be. The characters consist of two couples, Mel and Terri, and Nick and Laura. During the course of the story, one sees pieces of these characters' personalities, and histories. Through these glimpses one can make some judgments as to what exactly love is to each of these people.
>
> Mel, who could probably be considered the main character in the story, as he dominates the conversation, is seemingly obsessed with "putting his finger" on love. The conversation begins with Terri telling the others of how Ed (Terri's ex-husband) beat, and dragged her around their apartment. Still, she insists that Ed loved her. Mel disagrees, arguing that abuse of this sort excludes Ed from possibly loving her. But what is Mel's definition of love? After reading the story four or five times, I'm still not sure. My uncertainty stems largely from the fact that I don't think Mel is sure what love is.
>
> In the beginning of the story we find that Mel thinks of real love as being "nothing less than spiritual." That's fine, pretty vague, but that's "okay" too. A little later in the story he defines the love that each of them knows:
>
> > Physical love, that impulse that drives you to someone special, as well as love of the other person's being, his or her essence, as it were. Carnal love and, well, call it sentimental love, the day-to-day caring about the other person.
>
> He goes on to say that he doesn't understand how he could have loved his ex-wife so much, as he now hates her. He further explains this by noting that everyone in the room has loved and even been married before. He thinks that if either him or Terri would die that the other would love again, leaving only a memory of the love that was.
>
> Later, Mel describes his idea of "real love" in the story of an old couple who survived an accident together. He states that because of their casts and bandages they could not see

each other. It's this fact that depresses the older gentleman. Mel sees this as touching and vital to their conversation. Mel says, "I mean, it was killing the old fart just because he couldn't look at the fucking woman."

Besides sounding drunk, Mel seems confused. He gives three definitions of love, or three different viewpoints, and yet he doesn't adhere to any of them. He tells Terri he loves her, and yet he treats her poorly; he speaks to her in a condescending manner on a couple of occasions:

> Just shut up for once in your life.
>
> "Vassals, vessels," Mel said, "What the fuck's the difference? You knew what I mean anyway."

This obviously isn't the way one treats someone one loves, yet Mel does. One can draw a parallel between this relationship, and Ed and Terri's relationship in as far as the conflict of terms. In Ed's case it was, "I love you, you bitch, I love you." Mel's style is similar in that he repeatedly says he loves her yet he insists on treating her as less of a person.

Terri's personality is opposite to that of Mel's. She seems to be much more complacent and accepting. She responds to his biting criticisms with apologies, "Please, Mel," Terri said, "don't always be so serious, sweetie. Can't you take a joke?" From what I can gather about Terri, I find that her prerequisites for love and a successful relationship are few. I think her idea of love is simply having someone, a person to hold onto. Her dialogue shows her insecurity; it's almost as if she needs someone to approve of her:

> He did love me though, Mel. Grant me that, that's all I'm asking...You can grant me that, can't you?

Because of Mel's dominating nature one can tell little about her, except that she accepts passively.

Nick and Laura's idea of love seems to coincide. This makes sense as they portray a flirtatious couple still very caught up in their relationship after eighteen months of marriage. The description Nick gives about Laura is much more flowery than that of the others. He talks of the color in her cheeks, and the brightness of her eyes. I'm quite sure these aren't the things Mel would notice about Terri, which may show that love isn't a constant, as much as Mel may want it to be.

The talking that Nick and Laura do during the story is most always a response instead of a question. They aren't the ones questioning love; instead, they seem contented in it. Mel, on the other hand, talks endlessly about it which tells me he might be wondering exactly what love is, as he hasn't found it.

In comparing the couples and their action, I find that through their language Nick and Laura are saying that they've found, for the time being, what they're looking for. Conversely, Mel and Terri stand less of a chance of survival. The language Mel uses is

that of dissatisfaction, and restlessness. An example of this is the way in which he states that he'd rather be a chef, or if he had the chance to transcend the boundaries of time, a knight.

Although I'm not a psychoanalyst, the conclusions I have come to are, in my opinion, sound. They are the result of careful observation, but still they are only my opinion.

Mike's paper, one of the best drafts from a class of 20 students, moves from his initial qualification of the impossibility of reducing love to an equation, to his second paragraph where he's willing to "make some judgments as to what exactly love is to each of these people," to his case for Mel's confusion about love (and Mike's faulting him for not adhering to any of his definitions) and the poor way he treats Terri, to his case for Nick and Laura expressing their love flirtatiously, and then he quickly concludes that Nick and Laura have found what they're looking for, while Mel and Terri "stand less of a chance for survival." Then Mike adds his final move, a move which speaks to his discomfort trying to disentangle rather than decipher a text, when he insists his opinions are sound, "but still they are only my opinion."

I included the entire paper, because it frames Mike's uneasiness with problems posed for puzzling texts that defy locating meanings as givens in texts. He knows he has to form an opinion, he's not comfortable doing that, especially since he believes "there are few constants" in love, but he proceeds admirably, reading closely to make his case for Mel's confusion and Terri's insecurity and, finally, Nick's and Laura's contentment with their flirtatious love, but he's sure to say that this is only his opinion; he doesn't have the authority of a psychoanalyst, but his opinions are sound. The two moves here, his uneasiness forming an opinion and his subsequent case, are typical of students' initial beginning responses to these kinds of open-ended tasks. They're uneasy, but then they proceed to make their cases, arguing monologically, not admitting multiple possible readings, pointing to moments in the text as evidence that "shows" or "proves" something, and then finally concluding with propositions that shut down their possible rereadings or reinterpretations. Mike shuts down the four characters by offering judgments about their futures, judgments that take the position as the final word on their relationships so that he might be done with them.

What teacherly moves might encourage Mike to relocate himself in the field of play rather than in a courtroom? As it happened in this class, he had the opportunity to read and hear other takes on this story (because I duplicated papers with strong and various readings) while he received my comments both encouraging him to continue arguing his case and questioning his points, but the most pressure was brought to bear by his exposure to other readings quite different from his. (And here I would like to say again that although this opportunity to read and hear multiple interpretations can begin to open up a field of play, it does not by any means make its happening a certainty. Mike, for instance, never did play; he saw every other reading as evidence to be discarded or incorporated into his monologic reading, so the opportunities to read and hear others became, for him, not an occasion for tentativeness but an occasion for judgment, although by the end of the semester he did play a little by shifting his judgments to focus on the variability of love and the variability of our readings of it.)

As Mike and others in the class moved to strengthen their interpretations, they struggled with their close readings, because they weren't accustomed to moving among texts. They had a

difficult time incorporating the story into their readings, and they had an even more difficult time incorporating other student's readings into theirs as a way of speaking from or along with or against those readings. But we have to realize, too, that all of this difficulty is framed by their resistance to and lack of familiarity with forming interpretations of texts from open-ended problems and questions.

The next assignment in the sequence plays off of an interview with Ted and Ellie Graziano that was done by Tom Cottle for a book he did with Stephen Klineberg on people's perceptions of time. Here's the assignment:

> Ted and Ellie Graziano touch on one sensitive subject after another in their interview, but they never talk directly about love, even though they say they love each other. Sometimes they sound like Mel and Terri from the Carver story, and at other times, they seem more involved with each other in their arguments than any of Carver's characters.
>
> What are the Grazianos arguing about? What are their disagreements? What do their disagreements have to do with love?
>
> For this assignment, select three or four passages from the interview that you think best represent what Ted and Ellie talk about when they talk about love. Write an essay in which you discuss what these passages tell you about the Grazianos and how they understand love.

This is a more difficult assignment that the one for the Carver story, because there are no moments of direct talk about love as there are in the Carver story, so the act of interpretation is more problematic, more open to play in the space it occupies, but students didn't see it that way. They began their initial drafts by sticking close to the text, by retelling it and then representing those retellings as their readings, and it wasn't until we had discussed about ten different papers in class that they began to move away from close retellings to imagining possible readings of Ted and Ellie, their relationship, and their love. Here are excerpts from three early drafts of this assignment. The first two represent retellings as readings, and the last, Mary's, ventures quite a bold and tangled interpretive reading.

1.

> Ted loves Ellie and his family in the way that he wants a better life for all of them. His desire is for them to have everything they want, and he worries about how to make everything work out for the best, especially financially. If he would happen to die, he wants to know that Ellie would not have to struggle through life, at least financially. Ted states, "We'll manage. Eight thousand years, and I'll have this house paid off, and when I die she'll be set up." I INTERPRET THIS TO MEAN THAT IN CASE TED WOULD PASS AWAY AT LEAST ELLIE WOULD HAVE SOMETHING, SUCH AS THE HOUSE, TO HELP KEEP HER AND THE FAMILY SOMEWHAT SECURE FINANCIALLY. SHE WOULD NOT BE IN THE BIND FOR MONEY BECAUSE THE MONEY FROM THE HOUSE, EVEN IF SHE WOULD HAVE TO SELL IT, WOULD LAST FOR A LITTLE WHILE, UNTIL SHE COULD FIND A JOB OR SOME OTHER ARRANGEMENT TO KEEP THE MONEY SUPPLY FLOWING.

2.

Ted also could not bear the thought of his family working in place of him if he would happen to become incapacitated somehow; he would be humiliated, degraded. He states, "Many times I've thought about what it would be like having your wife and children working while you sat around the house, sick or something. That, my friend, is another form of death." SOMETHING INSIDE OF TED WOULD DIE IF HE COULD NO LONGER SHOW HIS LOVE TO HIS FAMILY BY PROVIDING FOR THEM. HE WOULD FEEL INFERIOR, LIKE HE HAS NOT DONE ENOUGH; HIS ACTIONS WOULD BE INADEQUATE AND SO WOULD HIS LOVE BE.

3.

Ted Graziano's dream was to free himself and his family from their gray monotonous lifestyle. Everyday Ted's way of living was a living nightmare. The loneliness, the boring newspaper job, the lack of support and responsibility from his family developed into a nightmare of reality. Ted states.

Everyday of my life I am totally alone, making it possible for four human beings to lead their lives with a little dignity. Four ungrateful human beings. I don't have a soul to talk to in this house. I see the way people are living. I see the way people are dying, and we're not getting any of it. Either one.

TED FEELS HE IS TRAPPED IN A TRIANGLE OF LIFE. IN EACH CORNER OF THE TRIANGLE IS HIS LIFE, HIS DEATH, HIS FAMILY, AND TED IS IN THE MIDDLE OF IT. When Ted says, "I see the way people are living. I see the way people are dying, and we're not getting any of it. Either one." Ted is talking about the rich people and Ellie's father's death. IN ONE SIDE HE SEES THE RICH LIFE AND HOW THEY BECOME SO SUCCESSFUL AND ON THE OTHER SIDE HE SAW ELLIE'S FATHER AND HOW HE LIVED HIS LIFE BY DRINKING HIS PROBLEMS AWAY AND NEVER THINKING OR PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE. TED SEES BOTH SIDES AND HE IS STUCK BETWEEN THE BOTH OF THEM. TED SEES AND TRIES TO REACH FOR THE LIFE SIDE, BUT HE CANNOT MOVE BECAUSE OF HIS FAMILY. TED NEEDS THEIR SUPPORT AND STRENGTH TO GO ON, BUT HIS FAMILY IS SO MUCH WRAPPED UP INTO THEIR DAY TO DAY LIVING THAT HE IS AFRAID OF FALLING BACK DOWN TO THE DEATH SIDE OF THE TRIANGLE AND RELIVE ELLIE FATHER'S LIFE. He says, "If only it worked that way. If only I could ever get ahead of it, instead of always chasing, chasing, chasing..." Ted is chasing, but he'll never get ahead because his family is not with him to share it. I FEEL THAT'S WHY THE RICH ARE SO RICH, BECAUSE OF THEIR FAMILY'S SUPPORT, IT'S LIKE A TEAM, EVERYBODY CHIPS IN AND HELPS PLAN AND PREPARE THEIR FUTURE TOGETHER, BUT TED'S FAMILY LEAVES TED TO DO EVERYTHING, THE PLANNING, THE PROVIDING, ONLY HIM, THAT'S WHY

HE IS ALWAYS CHASING.

When we discussed these excerpts in class (after about six writing assignments--mostly revisions--and eight one-and-a-half hour discussions), my students were quick to recognize the interpretations that weren't interpretations (papers #1 and #2), and although they appreciated what Mary (paper #3) was trying to do in her last paper, they took (almost to a person) another quasi-legalistic position towards the paper by arguing amongst themselves whether Mary's interpretation of Ted's being caught in the triangle of life was right. Was there enough evidence to support this position, they wanted to know, and then, immediately after this question, they (almost to a person again) took strong stands on whether they agreed or disagreed with Mary. No matter how I asked my questions (Is it possible, for instance, that there is no necessary right or wrong reading, that we see Ted from different angles, and that it's these acts of seeing and how we enact them that we might talk about?), they insisted on keeping the field closed, subjected to the moves of a monolithic logocentrism, but they were beginning to open up at least to entertaining multiple readings, and this assignment was the first occasion for them (as I see it through their papers) to move away from the notion of a correct or consensus reading to strong, individual readings (but, again, framed by their quasi-legalistic, monolithic notions rather than by any field of play that might involve self-reflexive readings).

Here's Joyce's second draft of her very unpopular position on Ted and Ellie. Notice how well she works the text from the interview into her reading (even though she's still using large chunks of text instead of weaving bits and pieces, she's learning to move between her language and the text's), and the paper serves as a good example of her ease with close readings, but no one agreed with her and she came under heavy criticism in class discussions for her position, which she finally give up, although not without conditionally qualifying her acquiescence. If, she said, everyone disagreed with her, then her reading was probably wrong, but it was still her reading, and she told the class that she felt entitled to it, no matter what they said.

I feel that Ted not wanting Ellie to work displays his love for her in that he wants to keep her out of the work force in order to protect her from what he has had to endure most of his life. I believe this because Ted states,

> If every day were the same, like it is, it would still be all right if I didn't ever have to wonder about how all the days string together. But it's the line of days, one after the other, each one repeating, and then the ability to look down the road and see exactly what's coming. Jesus, that's, that's...honest to God, man, it just about frightens me to death, because it means I can see the days leading right down to the end.

When Ted says this he appears terrified because he can predict his life up to the day he dies. Ted does not want Ellie to be able to predict her life and see the future like he can because it is harmful; it kind of takes away hope. Hope for something better is what keeps people going; Ellie still has hope; Ted has very little of it left. Concerning his own life Ted says,

> So now I got the problem of being born with a vision that looks down the road,

> and being able to see everything that's coming. They got lots of guys, I'm sure, give their right eyes to be able to see what's coming up for them. Well, I can see, and just being able to see is more of a curse than it is anything else. An evil *curse.*

Ted does not want Ellie to have such a predictable life like he does; he does not want it to curse her and make her as unhappy as he. He wishes her to stay the same even though he does not believe in living day to day or in God, but those two things at least give her hope, something that Ted never wants her to lose.

When Ted was in the army he enjoyed not knowing what was going to happen; he liked the suspense of it all. He states,

> I think that's why so many of us liked being in the army so much. Didn't anybody want to get killed naturally, but it was a change. Everything that led up to the army stopped once I got in, and what would come after no one could see. I thought about my future plenty then. Oh brother, we had a million conversations about the future. But no one could tell us the way it was going to be. The future was all mystery. I remember, that was my word for it, 'mysterious future.' It made you kind of scared. But now that I think about it, those jittery feelings were exactly the feelings I needed to get me going. They give you a kind of push, a motivation.

Ted realizes that some uncertainty in life is necessary to keep people moving along, always striving for more and better things. With his present job and life situation he does not have these feelings. He thinks he can see and predict everything to the end of his time on earth. He loves Ellie so much that he always wants her to have hope, and his desire is to spare her from this monotonous life he lives, especially in the work place where there is little hope for anything better.

Three of the women in the class immediately questioned Joyce about Ted's noble motives. How, they wanted to know, could he be concerned about Ellie's hope and the possible monotony of her life as a worker, when he refused to let her work, because a working-woman wasn't his idea of a wife? And, they continued, wasn't her life as a housewife monotonous, more monotonous than his job?

I chose Joyce's paper to duplicate because I thought it would spark discussion and because it was such a strongly argued paper, at least according to the rules the class had set-up for itself, and I thought we might, after the initial discussion of the paper's correctness, turn to what the paper said about logocentric arguments, so I asked the class what they thought about the argument as an argument. How was it possible, I wanted to know, that a paper could be so well argued, so seamless, and yet spark such disagreement? The class puzzled over the questions and finally came to some agreement that logic was like statistics, that arguments could be built for any position and evidence could be mustered to support it, but that didn't make it right. Most of the students felt that it was possible to lie with logic like it was possible to lie with statistics, but they were, to a person, still holding tight to the notion of right or, as they said (following, I'm afraid, my lead), stronger readings; but things changed from the first assignment

where they either offered retellings or monolithic consensus readings--they were now willing to recognize various readings as long as they were supported with evidence from the text.

The next assignment (for the Saul Bellow story, "A Silver Dish") asked for even more of an open-ended reading than the Graziano interview did, because Woody Selbst, the main character, buries his father in the midst of his widening struggle with love for a number of people, and like the Grazianos, he never talks directly about love. Here's the assignment:

> In the Saul Bellow story, "A Silver Dish," Woody Selbst struggles with his love for his father, his wife, his mistress, and his family.
>
> Write an essay in which you characterize Woody's love for the different people in his life, especially for his father, Morris. Ask yourself how his love for these people compares to his love for his father. In what ways could it be said to be similar? different? What passages or moments in the story can you use to explain and illustrate these similarities or differences?

This assignment (about three-quarters of the way through the semester) was an important marker point in my students' writing and discussion. They were now actively looking for multiple possible readings of the story, and they began class discussion with questions to each other about their individual readings. How did you see it? they asked each other; and they were willing to be tentative, at least until all the readings were out. Then they could decide, they thought, which ones were strong and compelling. Although we weren't in an open field of play yet, my students were now open to multiple readings, and they were reading each other's readings, and, more importantly, they were beginning to pay attention to the language of the story, not just the incidents or characters, the way they were paying attention to the language of their papers. What, I began to ask in the discussion, does the language of the paper, or the story, allow you to say about the paper or the story? Joyce's paper in response to the Graziano interview offered the metaphor and language of protection for Ted's position towards Ellie, and you, I said, read that closely to see how well it held up; now, I asked them, how do the metaphors in these papers portray Woody?

Wendy's paper, the first we discussed, reads the story in terms of its own metaphors and makes a remarkable move. She offers two quite different readings from the two different metaphors of love as a defensive shield and love as a peaceful offensive. In the second paper (excerpted here), Trudy reads Woody's language closely, within a given narrow context, to see if he literally means what he says, and she concludes that he doesn't, that Woody means almost the opposite of what he seems to be saying, and that his four words, "I got you, Pop," are the closest he comes to telling anyone his feelings. Here's the complete first paper, and the relevant part of the second.

I.

> "The Silver Dish" by Saul Bellow has a lot of possible interpretations on love. I chose two of these to write about. In the first interpretation love is a defensive weapon, a shield (to expand on Bellow's metaphor). In the second interpretation love is Woody's peaceful offensive attempt to make the world a better place: a world of love. Both of these inter-

pretations show why he loved everyone the way he did. It also explains why he shows more of this love to his father than anyone else.

In the first interpretation Woody uses love as a shield to protect himself from loneliness. He keeps himself busy loving others so as to shield himself from feeling lonely. Woody felt that solitude used the world as its reservoir. To keep from feeling the effects of the terrible solitude

> ...there always is [was] some activity to interpose, an errand to run or a visit...a shield between himself and that troublesome solitude which used the world as its reservoir.

As long he was doing things for his family, he had no time to feel lonely. Love shielded him from it. His schedule was full. Certain days he took care of his mother and sisters. Other days of the week he shopped for his ex-wife and his mistress. He bought his mother and sister clothes. He maintained their homes. He lent his father rent money which was probably never returned. He especially did a lot for his father. All the escapades that Woody lovingly followed his father on kept him too busy to be lonely. It didn't matter what Morris did to Woody or connect Woody into. Woody still loved him, he took up a lot of time. All of these loving actions kept him too busy to worry about solitude coming after him and making him lonely. If one does not think about something, it can't bother him.

The sudden absence of his shield shows how he was using it. On the first Sunday after his father's death Woody felt lonely. His shield was gone. Before Sunday all Woody had time for was an "Oh Pop" mumbled under his breath. On Sunday he heard the church bells ringing and grew sad and felt the impact of solitude. He really never paid attention to the bells on previous Sunday mornings. He was too busy getting up early to go visit with Pop. He heard them and "...all at once he knew how heartbroken he was." The bells melted his shield. He had a chance to think during his new free time, where he didn't have anything to do for anyone. "Heartache was deeply unpleasant to him." He did not like to feel lonely. That was precisely the reason why he used love as his shield. He didn't like the feeling solitude thrust on him.

The second interpretation is that Woody uses love as an offensive weapon to make the world a better place. Woody has a theistic theory. He thinks God's idea was that this world should be a love world, that it should eventually recover and be entirely a world of love. It isn't too easy to see at first, because he thinks that it is stupid and personal, therefore, he won't tell anyone about it. "Nevertheless," Bellow wrote, "there it was at the center of his feelings." If it is at the center of his feelings, it is important to him. Also, if it is at the center of his feelings and is important to him, it will govern his feelings and actions. He tries to give as much love as possible to make the world fit his theory. He does all the things mentioned earlier so that love is out in the world.

Woody shows the most love to the people who give him the least. The top of his list is Morris. Morris took Woody's caddy money that the poor kid saved from last summer to abandon him. He stole a silver dish and said, "so what, kid?" when Woody got blamed for it. Woody lost his job and someone to pay for his school after that. Morris never

made things right again for Woody. Woody still showed the most love to him. It fit in with his theory. He put as much love into Morris as he could, so he could make it a better world. To make a world of love one has to put love into it. He figured Morris *needed more love, I guess.*

Love can be both a defensive weapon for Woody to protect himself with and an offensive weapon to help others. I think either or even a combination of these shows why he loves everyone the way he does. It also shows why Morris got the most love from Woody.

2.

There is a similarity between his love for his father and for his love for the others in his life with respect to duty. For example, when his father and Halina needed help with the rent, Woody gave it. And when his father was abandoning him, Woody gave him the money that made it possible, or as Woody put it, he had "bankrolled his own desertion," because he realized that his father "couldn't get away without his help." It seems to me that Woody did these things out of a sense of duty, just as he did with the others, his dependents.

But Woody's love for his father stands apart from his love for the others in his life for the most part. The very fact that Woody mourned his father's death and the fact that "all at once he knew how heartbroken he was" gives evidence to me that there was more intensity of an emotion present in his love for his father. Also, the fact that Woody insisted on dressing the stiff himself and shoveled the dirt on the grave himself shows me Woody's devotion to his father. Unlike his relationship with the others I have mentioned, Woody shows a dependence on his father. When his father is talking to him about going to Mrs. Skoglund to ask for money, he says, "You're practically a man and your dad has a right to expect help from you. He's in a fix. And you bring him to her house because she's bighearted, and you haven't got anybody else to go to." To this statement, Woody immediately answers, "I got you, Pop." I think that for Woody to answer so directly that he has his father to go to he must have strongly believed that he really does have his father to depend upon in some way. I really don't believe that Woody meant he could go to his father for money, which is the context in which his father was making the statement, but that Woody took that statement, "...you haven't go anybody else to go to," and generalized it, took it out of the context in which his father was speaking, and thought immediately, "I got you Pop." I also think this statement was a kind of expression of love on Woody's part. I believe that Woody was trying to tell his father, in his own way, that he loves him. Throughout the story, this is the closest that Woody ever gets to verbally telling anyone about his feelings for them.

When we discussed these papers in class, my students once again approached them with the language of strength and strong readings. They wanted to argue about which reading was the strongest, and I deeply regretted introducing that metaphor at the beginning of the semester in my attempts to move them from retellings into strong interpretations, but (luckily) Wendy and Trudy refused to go along with the terms of the discussions, and argued instead for their

multiple readings being equally strong and valid and possible because of the story's ambiguity. Wendy's paper came under the heaviest criticism because it seemed to offer two irreconcilable readings of the story. How could his love be both a defensive weapon, students asked, and a peaceful offensive at the same time? Wendy argued, with Trudy's help, that it could, because the situation of Woody's was so complex, so subject to different influences, and that the story's language revealed this complexity by portraying Woody as a character whose feelings and actions didn't fit one mold. It was here, after this week's worth of discussions on these two papers (and another not included here) that the monolithic sense of a reading began to fracture, and I think we entered a field of play with these papers and discussions, but it was to be, as I'll demonstrate, constrained and bounded by a willingness to consider and fret-out multiple disentanglings but not by a willingness to be tentative about them, to hold them all in the air as readings to be read self-reflexively, although Mike, whose paper on the Carver story I used earlier, did move to what I would call a beginning self-reflexivity in his final paper that we'll look at in a moment.

These papers, this sequence, and my teaching with these students pose an intriguing problem that is brought forward by my students' discussions of Wendy's and Trudy's papers. Their insistence on arguing for the best interpretation or what they considered the strongest reading, presupposed a hierarchical sense of discourse and interpretations, where writings and readings exist in competition with each other rather than in concurrence or cooperation, and, reflecting this, our discussions shifted their valency, like tides of agreement, with whatever interpretation held sway, and these last two papers (for the final assignment) demonstrate this by the ways they position other people's writings as readings to be agreed or disagreed with, or, as in the case of Mike's paper, as true or not true readings. And it was often the case, especially past mid-semester, that students would rewrite their readings, sometimes drastically, to embrace a winning position or perspective, and this seemed to me as puzzling as their initial reluctance (up until around mid-semester) to reconfigure or reconsider a reading once it was written. The language of tentativeness and multiple readings and self-reflexivity offered through the assignments and discussions seemed directive to me, but I think my students were taking their cues from their experiences with monolithic discourse and its academic representation in homogeneity and final meaning or truth, and, paradoxically, they understood the language and situation of tentativeness as tentative, as a perhaps useful staging ground for their conclusions, not as an occasion for keeping a story or its various interpretations open to the play of writing and discussion. The impetus of this monolithic discourse is so strongly to shut down, to arrive at final meaning or truth, that it permutates momentarily to allow tentativeness and polyvalence, but it was constantly diffusing them for final conclusions and truth. Wendy offers a description of this in the opening page of her final paper.

> There has been so much that could be done with these three stories we read this semester that it was very confusing to come up with an opinion of my own. Each time I reread a story, I thought of something new to add or I changed my ideas completely. Each time another student spoke or I read another student's paper, I doubted my own interpretations. After reading Michelle's first draft to this final paper, I decided to go back to my original idea from the beginning of the semester. When I read her paper, I realized what I really believed to be true. I was too busy trying to change my interpretations to fit with the rest of the class's. Or I wanted to come up with something new and completely different. I lost track of the interpretations I originally had. Despite all the confusion or different interpretations, the one I really believe to be true has come to the

surface. As a matter of fact, the different interpretations brought up have helped me to strengthen my first one.

The final assignment asked students to take a position in relation to the characters from the stories and the interview. Originally, for the first draft, I presented it as an occasion for them to draw conclusions from the texts and their characters, but after reading these papers, it was clear that I had made a mistake and that I was working against establishing a field of play by asking for conclusions, so I reworked the assignment for the final drafts and asked students to account for the various characters' enactments of love and to take into consideration the various readings of these enactments that we discussed in class, but it was too late, and, as you'll see from these excerpts from three papers, Wendy's (#1), Mike's (#2) and Trudy's (#3), the course was already set by the first draft of the assignment. But there is still, I think, something to admire in these papers. All three of the students work with other students' readings, and although their major moves are to decipher the texts and other readings of them, within this they appear to be at least balancing and disentangling multiple possible meanings, and they are paying attention to appropriating text from other texts--mostly weaving rather than chunking it--an perhaps it is that these moves, however unsophisticated they appear here, are necessary before play and reflexivity can be established. Here's a section of Wendy's paper that continues after the opening description of how she worked. Notice how she writes back to other students' readings in the shadow of a dialogue, as opposed to a straight monologue, but she manages it within the contexts of an unequivocal meaning, one she says that she lost in the tangle of multiple readings but that she finally recovered by considering, as we'll also see Mike doing later in his paper, another student's reading of the unselfishness in Mel's feelings about Terri. This unselfishness becomes, for her and for Mike, the truth to hang a final conclusion on.

> Why did I like Terri's and Mel's relationship the best? There are a number of reasons. One major one is the fact that they put each other before themselves most of the time. When one really loves another, she or he is willing to sacrifice for that other.
>
> Mel put his life in danger to be with Terri. Her ex-husband, Ed, was a crazy man. He threatened to kill Mel. The threat was so real and terrifying that Mel even contacted his brother, an ex-Green Beret. He told him who was responsible, if anything happened to him. Terri said that they even lived like fugitives, and "(we) they were afraid." Mel said that he bought a gun, which wasn't in his nature. He used to break into a sweat before he even got to his car on dark nights. He was afraid Ed was going to jump out at him. Mel said he was "capable of wiring bombs, anything." Ed would call Mel's service, and when Mel returned the call, he'd say, "Son of a bitch your days are numbered." Mel was afraid. Mel said of Ed, "Little things like that. It was scary, I'm telling you." It is obvious that Mel was afraid for his life. So, why would he put up with that for any woman? Terri has to mean a lot to him, if he was risking death for her. She must have been pretty special for him to do that.
>
> Others have said in class that Mel just doesn't want to be lonely. That is why he is with Terri. If he was just lonely, he could have at least found someone who didn't have a crazy ex-husband. And believe me, Mel could have had other women. He is a doctor, a cardiologist even. I work at a hospital, so I see it. There are women who would go after any doctor no matter what he looked or acted like, because doctors spell money...So, if Mel can have a lot of other women, there has to be a reason why instead he decides to

be with one who has a crazy ex-husband who is trying to kill him...Therefore, Mel loves Terri because he puts his life in danger for her when he didn't have to, because he could have had other women...

I don't recall most characters in the other stories putting themselves before others. Morris certainly did not. All Morris cared about was himself...The result for his son, Woody, was the loss of a job and financial backing for seminary school...Morris's reaction to this was, "So what, kid." Morris certainly did not put himself before his son...Some people have said that this taught Woody a lesson. Sure it did. It taught him what his father was like...Woody is the one who put his father before himself. He took the blame for his father. So, I think Woody shows love to Morris by taking the blame in the same way Mel (to a more drastic degree) risks his life to be with Terri.

Ted is too caught up in the American Success dream to worry about putting others before himself. There is no way to tell if Ellie puts others before herself. The same is true of Nick and Laura.

Wendy, you'll remember, wrote the paper on the Bellow story where she read the characters through the metaphors of the defensive shield and the peaceful offensive offered in the story itself. The reflexivity of that reading has been overwhelmed by this convenient and powerful aphorism of, as she says later in this paper, "putting others before oneself," and for this she completely abandons her metaphorical reading of Morris and Woody and turns instead to cast their story and the other pieces in terms of personal relationships. The aphorism gives her the frame, the certainty, that makes this reading more attractive to her (partly because it is more attractive to others in the class) than her original metaphorical reading. When we discussed this paper in class, and when I asked her why she abandoned her other reading of the Bellow story, she returned again, as she does in the paper, to this aphorism, to its truth, as others did also, and the discussion quickly became a grand gesture to rationalize it as an overarching principal or frame rather than, as I had hoped, a conversation about its displacement of her attention to the language of Bellow's story. I believe my students understood my moves and questions just the opposite as I had hoped they would, and no matter how much I protested and tried to open up the discussion to Wendy's earlier reading of the Bellow story, the conversation steadily reduced itself to an argument in favor of this certain and safe frame. As I saw it, my only option was to take an even harder, insistent critical stance towards their quickly developing consensus, and I decided not to do that, to let them go where they would, because they had taken the class as their own, and preserving that seemed important.

Mike's writing latches on to the same aphorism as Wendy's does, and although both of them give over substantial space (Wendy's paper is eight pages while Mike's is ten) to considering other readings, they are essentially similar in the privilege they give to this monolithic reading. Here we pick up Mike's paper about half-way into his argument. Notice how similar it is to Wendy's and how he channels himself into the paper by means of the power of the aphorism.

I believe that Woody loves his family. He shows this in the way in which he cares for them. It has been a part of his everyday life since he was a teenager. What I feel started as a way of proving a point to all of those who doubted his character, ended up as routine. This routine became a part of his already compassionate personality. This rou-

tine equals love for those who benefit from it.

I understand the love Woody holds for his family because, finances permitting, I intend to do the same for my family. For some unknown reason I feel very comfortable taking care of the people who did so much for me. I realize that the circumstances differ greatly from Woody's, but still, we share the desire.

Why do I agree with the love Woody gives his family? The answer stems from an in-class discussion. It came to my attention that one conditional characteristic of love may be found in whether or not the person who supposedly is giving love is unselfishly willing to put that person in front of himself. After thinking about it, I realized that this was in fact true, especially for Woody.

Out of the seven or eight people I really love in this world, I would put everyone of them in front of me in certain situations. Try to understand what I'm saying. Sure, every once in a while anyone can be selfish with those people he/she loves, but ninety percent of the time I think you'll find that I'm true to my word. Woody is the same. Seemingly everything he does is done for a loved one. I have no reason to doubt that Woody would gladly trade spots with his father in the hospital room. I feel this is true with the rest of his family also. Much like Woody buys, he loves--with a "broad hand."

We came to call this class discussion, the one that seemed to reconfigure everyone's thinking, "the infamous unselfishness," and it's influence is again apparent in Mike's writing, not only in his mentioning it, but in his allowing it to reduce his reading and his personal connection to one rock-solid aphorism about personal relationships. He moves away, too, from the story as story, as language and writing (something he struggles with in his first paper that we looked at earlier), to the story as personal relations.

Trudy's paper makes many of the same types of moves that Mike's does; she weaves in comments on other students' interpretations and she quotes from the texts as well, but it's all done to present one rock-solid, seamless point of view that reduces other readings (and the stories) to statements on personal relations with which she either agrees or disagrees as she constructs the proof of her argument. All three of these final drafts also represent the class conversations. Students moved initially from these being occasions to argue for single, monologic consensus interpretations (no matter what) supported by "proof" from the texts under study to these woven discussions that encouraged various individual interpretations (still supported by the texts or now others' readings of them or some point of consensus) but bounded by this quasi-legal code of proofs and positions of agreement or disagreement. The move to reflexivity seems to have allowed students (like Wendy and Mike and Trudy) to take critical postures towards various interpretations, including, at times, their own, but it doesn't seem to have allowed them much depth or tentativeness beyond these postures, for they continually push their "burden of proof" arguments for the final say, the complete conclusion of these readings. They aren't willing to leave the question of meaning up in the air while they consider various interpretations for what they might say about the texts or the readers or the language and culture. But they are willing to invite individual readings, and they are willing to consider them critically (within the quasi-legal code, of course, of proofs based on evidence), and this seems to be a necessary move through the scaffolding of learning to make interpretations, learning to examine them critically, and learning to take reflexive stances towards those interpretations so that writings and discus-

sions might be more a field of play, examining texts and readings and language for what they might be said to say about each other, rather than a courtroom where judgments are made against the burden of proof on each individual reading.

Here's an excerpt from Trudy's final paper. Notice how she weaves quotes and references other readings from class discussions and papers into her paper, but how it's all done within the "evidence" to make her interpretation and to appropriate others' for her use or to dismiss others' if they don't support hers.

> Terri also made no comments on or appeared to even relate at all to Mel when he spoke about real love, the old couple's love. When Mel was describing his feelings and beliefs to the others, Terri responded, "Mel, for God's sake,...are you drunk?" I interpreted this comment to mean that she had no concept of what Mel was talking about when he described his idea of real love. I believe Terri is perfectly content with what she had and believes that it is love. I, however, have to disagree.
>
> Nick and Laura, on the other hand, don't really verbalize their thoughts on what love means to them. Laura says, "Nick and I know what love is...For us, I mean." When she tells Nick that it's his cue to say something, he instead "made a big production out of kissing her hand." Nick and Laura openly express their affection for one another by physical contact. Jeff argued in class that this proves that they love each other since they openly show their love to others. I disagree with his interpretation. This type of open display is stereotypical of newly-weds and says to me that they are insecure about their partner's love and must be assured of the love of their partner by their repeated physical contact.
>
> In class, Jeff argued that Nick and Laura are quiet because they are secure. But Nick and Laura have only been married for eighteen months and their "courtship," as Nick calls it, was sudden which leads me to believe that they may not have known each other very well before they got married. I think that their loves is too new and still in the honeymoon stage where everything is wonderful and there are no problems. However, once they hit reality, perhaps having their first real fight or run into a serious problem, that will be the true test of the strength of their "love." I don't have enough information to make a judgment whether or not they love each other. I can see that they think they do but it's all too early in their relationship to be able to judge.
>
> I did agree with something touched upon by Nick in describing his relationship with Laura. He says, "In addition to being in love, we like each other and enjoy one another's company. She's easy to be with." For Nick, being in love is apart from liking each other and enjoying another's company. I agree with Jeff when he said "friendship and love should go hand in hand." I see being "In love" as the irrational, newly-wed part of the attraction, like Nick and Laura. But a part of "love" for me is being friends with that person; its more than an infatuation or like a blind love in which the person can do no wrong. But for me love is being friends with the person, enjoying his company, and accepting that person's faults. I believe I hold these views from the way I was brought up.
>
> Trudy's paper stands, for me, for what was possible in this class with literature and for

its failures. Her interweaving of various readings and her willingness to at least begin to move to self-reflexivity towards the end of the paper, however superficial a move it is, offer a glimpse of what a more full-blown, more reflexive and critical class might have moved to, but she's caught, as I've been saying, in the burden of proof code, and she allows herself to be silenced by the received talk about "the true test" of Nick and Laura's love, and the end of the paper seems to give itself over completely to those received aphorisms.

Taken together, these three papers demonstrate what I would call fundamental or beginning moves in this scaffolding through the making of interpretations and critical interpretations of those interpretations. But even though there are solid signs of these students appropriating texts (mostly for proofs in their arguments rather than for reflection), considering other students' interpretations, relating their comments to their values and assumptions, they are only the barest moves, and I would say they are superficial, except my sense is that for these students they were not, that they are bare, partly because they haven't looked closely at what they've been saying, and also because this kind of interpretive activity with texts and with each other's interpretations is genuinely new to them, or at the least it is not an intellectual activity that they have had much practice with in high school. So they make the beginning moves, the way it might be said that a novice skier does, but they're not close the way they might be from critical practice with a lot of reading and writing and discussion in their backgrounds.

My students were good at the very thing I offered through Holden Caulfield as a negative example in my opening remarks. They simplified and unified their interpretations, except for some rare moments in Mary's paper on the Carver story and Trudy's on the Bellow story, within a code of claims, evidence, and conclusions, and hardly digressed at all from their attempts to read these texts for monologic, unequivocal meanings and to then test those meanings against claims of proof for their truth, or, as often happened, for whether or not they agreed or disagreed with them. It was difficult for my students to allow that multiple interpretations of texts might exist alongside each other without one being better or more truthful than the other, and although they finally, towards the end of the semester, allowed individual readings, to a person they took the position that any tentativeness in judging the best interpretation was simply an occasion to withhold judgments until all evidence--all the interpretations--were in.

Self-reflexivity, a necessary element in opening literature study to what I was calling a field of play, a space where multiple interpretations and interpretations of those interpretations could be critically considered for their origins ("in texts," or "in language and culture," or "in people's pasts") and implications, rather than for their correctness or truth, was also difficult for my students, partly because their postures within the quasi-legal code begged closure and partly because they didn't read texts, including their own and themselves as texts, very closely--something new and unpracticed for all of them. Our class discussions of the texts and of their papers were similar to their writings--the same posturing for unified, rational statements of meaning seemed to be at work.

My feelings now, after having written most of this paper, are along the lines of my earlier speculations about my students' scaffolding through the learning of these various interpretive moves before they can begin to enter literature study as a field of play, and it seems likely that they could have "played" if they had had opportunities to form interpretations and critical readings of texts and their interpretations in their schooling. When they might have

begun this is certainly an important issue, and although I wouldn't want to make a case based on grade levels, it does seem to me that they could have learned to do these interpretive activities during high school without much difficulty. My desire to use sequences of reading and writing assignments comes from my sense of these activities being done for larger projects, like the ones sequences can offer, with multiple readings (usually offering a number of perspectives on a question or problem posed by the sequence) and with writing assignments that build on and play off of each other as students become more expert and practiced in the interpretive acts and in the nominal subjects of the sequences. Overall, then, my sense of the scaffolding in the context of reading and writing sequences is that students learn to do the thing itself, the monolithic interpretation inscribed in a quasi-legal code of claims and proofs, before they learn to undo it in a field of play, or at least that seems to be the case given my students' strong commitments to monolithic readings, even though that commitment didn't translate to thorough or sophisticated readings.

My students seemed to be just learning interpretive moves, and their continual retreats into the quasi-legal code and discussions of agreement and disagreement, true or false readings, seemed to be more indications of their unfamiliarity with the kinds of things being asked of them than of their abilities or willingness or interests, and there were moments in their papers and discussions when we, as a group, at least had glimpses of what it might be like to be in a field of play with our study rather than in a courtroom.

My moves, my insistence on their working for "strong interpretations," rather than for a way to imagine and develop multiple interpretations early in the semester, played to the kinds of monolithic readings I tried to displace or at least fracture, and as certain as I am about this, I am just as uncertain as to whether we would have worked any differently if I had proceeded by first asking for multiple readings and self-reflexive attention to those readings, especially through assignments that specifically asked for multiple rather than single readings. This is an interesting problem that has to do with my proposal that students scaffold through learning the thing itself before learning to undo the thing, partly, I think, because of our cultural inscription in monologic discourse, and partly because a field of play exists to ceaselessly posit meaning only to "evaporate it," and the positing of meaning, then, can take various forms, including quasi-legalistic, rational arguments. But the question remains: would my students have played more with multiple interpretations, with discussions of their origins, if the assignments asked for them, or would that have been even more difficult for my students, since they had such a hard time forming single interpretations and accepting others' interpretations? Is, in other words, the monolithic, burden of proof code so overwhelming that it has to be done before it can be undone, or can it be undone immediately by asking for multiple interpretations of a text and discussions of their possible origins by individual students?

Part III

Epilogue

There's silence between one page and another.
The long stretch of the land up to the woods
where gathered shadows
exit for the day

and nights show through
discrete and precious
like fruit on branches.
In this luminous
and geographic frenzy
I am still unsure
whether to be the landscape I am crossing
or the journey I am making there.

Valerio Magrelli, translated from the Italian by Jonathan Galassi

As I reread my paper now in the context of the prologue's remarks on teaching models, I'm struck by how much my original sense of my students' scaffolding through a set of moves in interpretation seems situational, more connected to the context I designed than any "developmental" progression. At first my students practiced forming monologic interpretations. This was a task I set for them and it seems questionable. Even given that they weren't practiced at forming interpretations and began by retelling texts, I want to consider why I didn't begin by asking them to form multiple interpretations instead of the "strong reading," the monologic one asked for by the assignments, that automatically positioned them in a way where they had no choice but to write their single readings. This is an important question. It underlies the paper's closing one about whether or not they need to do the thing itself, the monologic reading, before they undo it. I don't know how my students would have begun with multiple readings, but I am sure they would have tried. To initiate their multiple readings, I could have brought examples before them of what those might look like, and it could have been the case that those would have been examples I wrote, so, then, we might have begun a discussion of the examples and the theoretical contexts from which I was working. All of this is to say that I can imagine this now but didn't then.

A question that strikes me as adjacent to the one on how my students might have proceeded with multiple interpretations has to do with how much of what evolved during the semester proceeds from this beginning monologic move. If, in other words, we had begun forming multiple interpretations, isn't it then the case that we would not have proceeded as we did with our ceaseless discussions of which interpretations were better or truer or with which ones we agreed or disagreed? This is partly what I am thinking of when I claim that the progression of the class through what seemed a scaffolding (from forming monologic interpretations, to considering them in relation to others, to appropriating and referencing others, to beginning to explain the origins of these interpretations, to the final level of getting caught in a received aphorism) is situational. And the situation, which is dominated by my desire to help my students learn to form their own interpretations in light of their desire to retell, is already, at its onset, caught in the discourse of monologic readings; and it seems now, in hindsight, that if one begins there, then it necessarily will be difficult to enter a field of play with tentativeness about readings as one of its characteristics. But what if we did begin with individuals providing multiple readings? What might that look like? Would the monolithic discourse have fractured any other way, or would it have been similarly difficult to establish a field of play because the underlying process--forming readings--is identical and always already shaped by the dominant discourse that includes this desire for unified, "true" readings?

In an oblique way this brings me back to the opening argument against teaching models, for it reiterates the overpowering blindness of the monologic. The progression of what happened in my class was an occurrence that might be presented as a model if one were to take the scaffolding as a "natural" progression, a developmental one. On the other hand, if one views what happened as an occurrence, always situational but never removed from the dominant discourse, then it becomes much more difficult to over-generalize it as a model the way the discourse would have us do in its attempt to unify, simplify, and solidify. Once the over-generalization about a situation's progression or development is made, often in terms of a "natural development," it becomes a Mobius strip, in which people begin to see things in the model's terms, which are always the dominant discourse's terms, and then we even begin to design strategies for the model that perpetuate it, and it becomes "unthinkable" to see or do things differently. It seems to me that models always already reflect, as my teaching and sequence design do, a subject's desires, and as models they solidify that desire. Paradoxically, my strategies and the situation they created could be said to have worked in somewhat the same way a model might have, only I didn't begin with a teaching model as such, as something presented to me in second level, derivative discourse. I began working alongside theory and my interrogation of it for pedagogy, but I was already inscribed in an approach that I am here now, with the help of other readers and theory, questioning. And it's not as if there's an answer waiting to be discovered, for there isn't anything I could do that wouldn't be already inscribed in a dominant discourse. The problem is that my strategies, like meaning, can be helpful to me (remember I'm a subject in this also) and my students as people attempting to create a field of play only if they exist in a space that allows them to be ceaselessly constituted and then evaporated, like meaning. If I don't keep cycling back and over what I do, then what I do moves towards solidification as a model. When teachers are removed from theory and critical conversations of it and what they do with it, and when they are forced to deal with second level derivations in the forms of teaching models, this space for play is shut down. And that is a major difference between enacting pedagogy with theory at one's side and teaching from a model. The former at least opens up possibilities by opening up a discourse and, then, what we call "consciousness," while the latter shuts down discourse and "consciousness" to everything but itself.

Foucault would attribute the role of my pedagogy to an exteriority, to the regulations and rules of a discourse (including its contradictions and disruptions; Foucault, 1972, p. 138), and while it certainly exists within that, I am uncomfortable with the completeness of this way of thinking, with its willingness to assign the statements that I make in the name of a pedagogy to only an exteriority in an enunciative domain. I am, instead, as I have been all along throughout this paper, taken with Said's argument which allows will and intention to restore subjectivity to subjects in enunciative domains while positioning them also in the rules and regulations (including, of course, the discontinuities) of that domain (Said, 1975, p. 372-79). This move also allows the restoration of affection and emotions and, then, their enactments through will and intention by subjects in enunciative domains such as this educational one. This is an important digression from Foucault and Derrida, because it allows subjects intention and will and emotion (which might be understood to exist alongside intention), and so subjects are always situated, and any discussion of agency, of what subjects might construct, would necessarily, in the shadow of Said, include a discussion of particular intentions and emotions. This speaking of and about intention by subjects is, to anticipate the question, a substantially different move in a different domain than the interrogation of texts for authorial intentions, and it is often the case that these two acts are confused in a discourse that wants to unify them in the term "intention."

Foucault's archaeology wouldn't look for motives or what's expressed in the fact of my sequence (as I'm about to do). It would rather analyze the rules and formations (for an attribution of innovation, contradictions, comparative descriptions, and the mappings of transformations; Foucault, 1972, p. 138) to which it belongs. An initial archaeological move would be the division and delimitation of the two domain's concerns: fathers and sons, and male love. One could also see, then, the comparative relations of these concerns to--in my case--the working class discourse in which they're situated. Also visible would be the larger enunciative domain in which both of these--my particular instance and a particular classed discourse--are inscribed: the historicity (one that is quite varied) of the paternal which also overlaps the historicity of the monologic. (But are they the same? Perhaps not, for the paternal disrupts itself differently than the monologic: the paternal fractures by considering its adjacent maternal; the monologic fractures with multiplicities. It could be possible, then, for the maternal to assume a space similar to the paternal, but multiplicities couldn't assume a space similar to the monologic, so perhaps it is the case that this is not an overlap by another discourse but one inscribed in another--the paternal in the monologic.) This has bearing here, as we'll see later, because the feminist critique of the sequence disrupts it in much the same way obsessions with paternalistic discourse can be disrupted by the maternal, and in much the same way that obsessions with monologic discourse can be disrupted by multiplicities.

Working with theory like this in the contexts of an on-going conversation about literature teaching allows me to re-examine my methods during the class, as I did with the example above where I questioned beginning students with single "strong" readings, and in the design of this sequence. As the problem has already been posed, there's a serious misrepresentation in this sequence. It privileges male voices and perspectives. The sequence also privileges one cultural perspective, and as I am redesigning it, I'm paying attention to representing women, other cultures, and issues of class differences. This is easy enough to do, but what fascinates me is how I constructed this sequence as I did. It's too simple a gloss to say I did it because I'm caught up in valorized male discourse. Although this may be so, glosses like this erase my agency as a subject who is always situated in particular circumstances, and it's those circumstances that I would like to briefly explore as a way of moving around my desires to see how they worked their way into the sequence as well as its enactment.

I'm hesitant about doing this, because I don't want it to seem as though I'm defending the sequence or rationalizing why it was written the way it was, but it's so obviously male, concerned as it is with issues of male love and the relationships between fathers and families, that, for me, it's a question of asking how it came to be constructed so I might study my history as a subject acting and creating pedagogy with other subjects. That's why this epilogue seems so essential to me; it extends the conversation and allows me to speak from a re-vision that includes the comments of my readers instead of, as is traditional to this kind of academic discourse, going back and fixing my representation of the pedagogy so it might be "truer" and less subject to its own inconsistencies and disruptions. This can lead to, as I want to demonstrate, reformulations and self-reflexivity; and often, as is the case here, this change doesn't proceed in a unified way. Like Holden, I can reconfigure my thinking by my digressions, and to represent that process as unified and replicable is to misrepresent it.

So, now I would like to digress on to the questions of how this sequence was constructed and implicate the concerns of this sequence and, therefore, my concerns--issues of male love and relationships between fathers and sons--as especially strongly classed in the behaviors and discourse of my class, the working class, where the father is central, responsible (by his and his culture's creation); sacrificial (a position he shares with women), in the sense that he gives up things and comforts for his children and family; and mysterious, in the sense that by his absence at work, often at two jobs, he is the least visible family member. The father's attention falls on his son usually before his daughter and attempts by the son to unravel that relationship, one that is so strongly coded as primary (as opposed, say, to the one with the mother which is coded as secondary), turns to questions of male love and evolves, then, in an odd mixture of discourses at once bounded by class and by a class insistence that the subject of love is unbroachable.

14 WYANDOTTE: It was one of those large two story wooden places, clapboard and shake shingle, unfinished attic and basement, a porch, no lawn, in a block of identical houses on a street lined with huge elms. The rooms reeked a sourness of dogs. Directly down the hall from the front door, the kitchen floor warped under an iron wink and a door to the dining room. Upstairs -- green walls and more warped floors. It was a nasty piece of work and took years to remodel, and now the trees are gone and only my father is left.

When he talks suicide, I tell him there are reasons to live, and he tells me, with that voice, that I don't know what I'm talking about, that I don't know the pain he feels. He says it with the voice now inside of me, the one that speaks and snaps out when I am afraid or angry, and I have begun to hear it in my sons.

This is the voice that says it has had enough, it will do what it wants, stay away, listen, be warned, maybe to protect itself, to conceal the pain, or maybe it's only power or rage that wants to go on living, a survivor, misplaced from the Depression or war, trying to pass itself along, trying to find a place in my sons.

One of those sultry days before we had a car, we rode in my uncle's blue coupe to his place on the river. Ma stared ahead in the front.

The working class saturates my life, and it wasn't surprising to hear one of my readers talking about the valorized male points of view in this sequence, and from the outside I can see it that way, yet from the inside, from being a subject in my working class situation, it looks quite different. When this sequence was constructed, my attentions were turned to these issues, especially as I seemed to me to be duplicating the language and behavior of my father in ways that I did not want. As I came to question this cultural inheritance, my desire to understand what had happened to me, and how what had happened to me was now happening to my two young sons, overwhelmed me in a discourse that was both paternal and monologic. I became obsessed with these questions, and initially they were directed only at the father and son relationship, then at issues of male love, and only after I had spent years interrogating people, including my parents, and texts, did my attention turn to considering the ways I wrote and talked about and considered my mother and sister as subjects in the larger picture. My intentions along with the discourse of my class, a discourse that continues to saturate my language and thinking, directed my interrogations in much the same way that they're constituted and enacted in the context that I'm calling my working class situation, for I don't think "working class" is a monolithic occurrence, although it's often represented that way, so that my attention turned initially

She must have distrusted us even then, when he imagined she couldn't handle money, and since she didn't have a job, she didn't have any. They shopped at discount stores, where he would let her buy little things - plastic containers, dish towels, cups and saucers - and when she left, they were stacked unopened in the cupboards and closets.

That night he came home from Scoops - Ma called it a "gin mill" - with a lopsided tree over his shoulder, the giant elms were covered with snow. She said (I remember her exact words), "your brain must be going bad, you can't even see straight anymore." Furious, he chopped it into pieces, then Ma went out, dragging me along.

Picture the two of us carrying a tree - Ma muttering under her scarf as the wind howled off the river, then imagine that the lord left his place and stopped at ours for drinks, and listened to our troubles then passed out while it snowed for days and the windows froze, turning the trees and houses and light into refractions of themselves.

Marx said the increase in values is the result of self-valorization of capital; my father said his will is in the safety deposit box along with his CDs, and if I die before him, it all goes to the kids, so I shouldn't worry, and so there it is, death at 6 in the morning with weather threatening from the north, with this vague sense that the days and weeks have been going too quickly; maybe it's the month, maybe that's why my father called to say where the goods are, which brought death into every movement of the day. So, why if we're all going to, everything and all, are we here (such a simple question), but that supposes reasons, and who's to say they are more than inventions, like money and factories - the Great Pacific Paper, the Anaconda Brass, the General Motors - which invited my father to hand over his life for them, and he did.

to what's constituted as privileged in my situation--fathers and sons, and male love. The sequence was written, as were a group of poems from my second collection of poetry (The Man Who Looked Like My Father), in the midst of this obsession, and as the issues unraveled, so did my monolithic attention to fathers and sons, and male love.

It's an odd experience seeing this from both the inside and the outside, as both exteriority and interiority, as the force of culture and discourse and the force of intention and emotion. Yet it remains, as I have been saying, saturated in my working class situation, and perhaps the best way to portray this is to offer up an analogy, one that allows me to say, too, that it seems inevitable to me that a feminist reading of this sequence and its construction is exterior to my working class situation, which does not mean that it is irrelevant, but only that it is unlikely to come from within that working class situation, for that situation constitutes itself and is constituted by codes and discourse that position feminism (and theory, as I will argue in a minute) outside of itself. And this points, too, to the odd space that class transformations create. My culture and language remain saturated with the working class, yet to understand this, I have had to pay attention to what lies outside of that situation[10], and in so doing, another space opens, one that is at once saturated by working class culture and overlaid with other, perhaps .aw off middle class, culture and language. When I think of an analogy, I think of theory and how it is possible for me, from the outside of working class saturations, to be enthralled with postmodern critical theory, but from the inside feel strongly that what we've got here is a bunch of elitist men talking about the theories of other elitist men who erase the realities of class distinctions that I understand from living them as events and values, as powers and forces, that are not just the constructions of discourse, that involve the day-to-day privileges (and lack of priviledges) associated with

The sun turns yellow in the window and already it's hot. My mother (in her pink housecoat) and I stand in the kitchens of different houses in different cities, eating. She stands next to the white stove as my son does here, and when we ask him to sit with us, he turns his head slightly, annoyed, squinting as I do.

Now the yellow mums among the red and orange or slightly brown ones remind me of my mother who always this time of year, the leaves falling, imitating colors, placed pots of them on the tables in the dining room (as I have) and, as we called it, the parlor, where she liked to sit with her lady friends to drink coffee and smoke Kents, and they would say, "Oh Bernice, such lovely mums," and it was easy to see why they liked each other so, talking about the neighbors as if they themselves were the mums, the interjected, the "Oh Betty, such a thing to say," or "Oh Bernice, you're a riot," and it seemed so comfortable in the presence of the mums with the lightest scent of bay and pine scattered here and there on small plates in the parlor in the smoke with the ladies on a splendid, cold fall afternoon with an already noticeable low sun and its peculiar light on the white buildings.

She is the woman in my dream, the one who announces in her old age that she is pregnant, then the man, the one drinking and digging in the yard, walks out (as she finally did), and I stand there opening my arms to hold her here where I have become my mother's most feminine of gestures, her presence in her hands shaping the once intimate space between her and Rosie and Betty with this idea of a self dissatisfied with herself, disturbed - the self of my-mother-myself isolated, outside, fashioning surfaces to be attractive and lovely, gesturing here to another woman - the one on the sofa listening to me in this place near the ocean - with my mother's long bony hands to hold the words to be held, and like her, my mother, not getting it right yet.

money, work, and time. And of course, looking at this reaction as culturally bound in an enunciative field, coming at it, that is, from the exterior, I'm struck how once again the valorized male voices, this time the ones doing theory and implying pedagogy, have taken the initial and privileged position afforded them by the working class culture that would, I think, exclude them. And so once again it seems that valorized male voices have displaced other perspectives, including those offered by women, the women from my life and the possible feminist readings of this entanglement. My uncomfortable feeling in this entanglement has to do with what feels like a limiting Mobius strip of male discourse, from that of my class to that of the theory which has allowed me to play with pedagogy, and the way in which it seems to desire to erase my connections to women, especially to my mother, and how I write and think about them. This is a discourse that moves me farther away from my mother, from the women I love, and allows me to erase them as subjects occupying positions related to the positions that I occupy. Goodbye identity -- and the individual and cultural responsibilities attached to it. Said's shadow allows me to restore subjectivity to subjects, to say there is an odd space here, one that has to do with class and gender and subjects' intentions; and the theory that I am working alongside continues to marginalize these issues while, paradoxically, at the same time, making it possible for me to understand them in culture and language and, then, in my actions and enactments. How utterly disorienting. How stressful and far afield of teaching models and "truth." Yet how pertinent to questions of power. Who, then, does this theoretical discourse serve? Who does it empower by what it posits, by what it creates? and who does it marginalize by what it erases?[11] There are intriguing questions about power related to these issues of discourse, and I am particularly sensitive to those that raise doubts about the continued viability of theories that erase "identity" and "subjects" and present them,

then, as discourse intersections. I am also interested in the way theory can marginalize those who feel intimidated by it, especially those teachers who feel this way, because of the didactic and dynastic methods that are traditionally used to present it in formalized studies, especially when it is seen and hailed as knowledge-as-object. Adjacent to this concern is a lateral one about the way the theories that I am working alongside initiate a particular skeptical or suspicious stance towards literature, one that also desires to replace literature with theory and criticism. All of this adds up to the stress, the necessary stress, of dealing with theory. And while these issues are certainly too generalized here to be of much use, except as markers for further discussions, they have bearing on the problems I posed about teaching alongside theory, because theoretical studies exist within a space concerned with their own power, and it is quite possible for them to be ushered along by postures that embrace "banking" methodologies to preserve that power; and so it is possible, then, for theories like these that deal with and in multiplicities to propose themselves monolithically while offering methodologies for undoing that monolithicness. What's left, then, after this unraveling are the methods, the methodologies, and the questions that, along with the methods, might begin another more visibly political undoing: who is served by this discourse? by this arrangement?

Transformations and Change

A part of the transformation and change in this project over the course of a year's time is my assuming various points of view, and learning from those actions that I do want to reconstruct this sequence--a reconstruction that occurs as I rethink--to redefine the problem and field of play to include women's voices and matters of class and culture; and by doing this, I transform not only the sequence but also the space in which I am situated, and then the language I might use to say who I am.

My original paper puzzles over my discontinuous attempts to open a field of play by remaining in monologic discourse, both in the terms of the kinds of assignments and in the field of perspectives defined by the sequence. By shifting my analysis to myself as a subject, another space opens to reveal the overlapping concerns of class and gender working their ways into the domain defined by the sequence of assignments. The conclusion of my analysis points to the gender and class contradictions that are revealed by turning the analysis back on the forms of discourse that made them possible.

The analysis also raises questions of knowledge in this field, teaching literature, which has been traditionally inscribed in the discourse of theory but largely as a place with concepts "to know" rather than to interrogate, to enact, and to reveal. It seems to me that classroom "literary" studies are inscribed in secondary derivations which, of course, transform the theory that informs them and, at the same time, defines separate spaces, separate enunciative domains, for teachers, theoreticians, researchers, and students (why shouldn't they be in on the theoretical frames that inform what's happening to them?). Teaching models, to continue unraveling this thread, are inscribed in a discourse, an enunciative domain, that unifies and solidifies continuities and erases discontinuities, rather than revealing or disrupting them, at a level removed from the practitioners who use them. These codes of practice--treating knowledge as objects, transforming discontinuous and problematic theory into unified models, and removing practitioners from theory--embody a discursive practice and a body of knowledge that allows teachers to be treated as they treat their students, as individuals outside of the enunciative field that interro-

gates theory and practice, and as individuals caught in a dynastic discourse that passes along knowledge from higher to lower levels as if knowledge were objects rather than discursive practices. Teaching models, which are difficult to disrupt because their dominant monologic discourse desires to transform continuities and discontinuities into unified, solidified secondary level concepts, shut down theoretical fields and practices (like, for example, this project) by turning the discussions into debates over which is the right or true pedagogical model. These debates are then carried on in the discourse of seamless, monolithic academic papers that hide or explain away their contradictions and discontinuities. One alternative to this kind of writing and thinking is what I have been calling the continuing conversation that admits other voices, that turns back on itself and its methods to see what they might reveal about theory and practice.

A continuing conversation at various levels and in various enunciative fields has allowed me to reformulate a pedagogy and myself. The alternative, which a reader asked for, is to silence me, to keep this--the rethinking, the refusal to alter "The Original Paper" to be closer to the other paradigm of unified, plastic continuities[12]--from being created and from being subjected again to further conversations that challenge and disrupt notions of true and replicable teaching models, replicable models that solidify the theoretical. I am positioning this paper, then, against the exclusionary notions of teaching models in which I see this essay, in all its parts, as disruptive and fragmented. Intentionally so, because I would like to begin to offer another way of thinking about teaching literature, one positioned in the continually stressful relationship of theory and practice and language.

Notes

[1] Hunter proposes a teaching model which moves teachers through specific steps of direct instruction. The steps (i.e., setting anticipations, stating objectives, direct instruction, guided practice, testing for comprehension, etc.) become categories in lesson plans that are meant to evolve sequentially in the teaching of skills. Once a skill is mastered, the teacher then moves on to another skill following the same sequence of instruction. This has been a very popular program with strong advocates coming from school district administrators who see it as a way of ensuring identical instruction for all students and, in effect, making the sequence of instruction teacher-proof. My experiences with this is the Pittsburgh Public Schools have led me to consider this yet another attempt to take responsibility for teaching away from teachers and to locate it instead with a model of instruction that desires to be considered, as it is presented to teachers, as "objective" and "scientific."

[2] It's easy to pass over the language of plot, character, and setting as "natural" to stories without considering that this too represents a model for teaching fiction, one that avoids, for instance, confrontations with issues of gender or class or culture and allows stories to exist in a field defined by these terms - plot, character, and setting. As a model, it has become hyper-attenuated by its application to increasingly smaller chunks of text. I saw a recent example of this in one of my son's schools where the students were asked a series of plot, character, and setting questions on worksheets for each chapter of a 130-page novel. Not surprisingly, it took the class almost two months to "cover" this short novel, and my son learned to hate it and the method in about one-third of that time.

[3] Although Dewey insisted throughout his career that theory and practice flowed from each other, that teachers entered into theoretical experiments when they taught and had, then, a responsibility to inquire into the hypotheses they enacted and formed in this teaching, his progressive movement came to stand for today's equivalent of vocational education with the emphasis on providing students with work-related, "practical" experiences in schools. Perhaps his best recapitulation of his own position in response to this transformation is his Experience and Education (1963).

[4] In The Pedagogy of the Oppressed Freire develops what he refers to as "the banking concept of education," which represents the notion that knowledge exists like objects to be transferred or given to others by those who possess it. The possessors, according to Freire, are the oppressors, for they control literacy and consciousness not so much by the fact that they possess the knowledge as by the methods, the banking methods, with which they control learning by disallowing the oppressed the means by which they might pose and solve their own problems.

[5] In Cultural Literacy (1988, p. 14), Hirsch asserts that people learn information by being taught it, and later (p. 30) he argues for "basic acculturation," a basic repertoire of knowledge, by age 13, and he bemoans recent disdain for memorization. His position seems to me to reflect the status quo of learning in the schools. Ninety-five percent of what my two children (ages 8 and 11) do in school is rote learning (by my literal account of a year's worth of written and worksheet "work"), and the great failure of their education, as far as I am concerned, is this emphasis on information (and its testing) and their lack of reading books and stories, especially the absence of opportunities to write and talk about reading. Their understandings, their sense

of knowledge about the world (and about texts, of course) proceeds like a spelling list of information, not as knowledge grounded in close-readings of or engagements with texts (books, experiences, discussions, observations, etc.), including those texts they might produce themselves. This is how I read Hirsch's thinking about literature, as a body of knowledge about literature, and there isn't anything, in my experience, new in his position. It's status quo.

[6] Hirsch's insistence on referencing literacy to a dictionary solidifies his position on what literacy might be to him. Lists of information pose literacy as a quantitative equation - the more one has, the more one is said to be literate. This metaphor, a "banking metaphor" of learning, as Freire calls it, creates a ground for oppressive relationships between those who have and those who do not, and so I think the implications of this way of thinking about "to teach" is incompatible with any way of thinking about "to teach" that values students doing the work of studying literature - interpreting texts and their own interpretations.

[7] When I later refer to scaffolding, I am using in the sense that Vygotsky implies here. That is, that people learn not just a skill itself but a self-consciousness of the learning of that skill. I realize that scholars like Courtney Cazden use this term differently, but my sense of it is pretty strictly Vygotskian - the learning and the consciousness of self-reflexivity of that learning.

[8] David Bleich's (1988) response heuristic (as he proposes it in his book Subjective Criticism) is as formulaic in what it asks students to do as, say, constructing themes and plots and symbols, only Bleich suggests that students' responses be grounded in their personal associations instead of simply in the text. Response heuristics like Bleich's (I'm using him to represent a field here) seem, finally, to preclude any sense of texts posing problems or problems being posed through literature by teacher or student-made projects (like the sequenced reading and writing assignments that I'm so taken with). In calling for a field of play in the study of literature, I am more interested in the questions teachers and students pose of texts and of each other's readings of those texts, than I am in any heuristics for response that privilege certain formulas for response.

[9] See Bartholomae & Petrosky's Facts, Artifacts, and Counterfacts: Theory and Method for a Reading and Writing Course (1986) and Ways of Reading (1987) for examples of sequenced reading and writing assignments. The "Growth and Change in Adolescence" sequence in Facts makes use of books like I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou, The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger, and Coming of Age in Samoa by Margaret Mead, while Ways offers sequences with essays and stories. The sequence on "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love" that I use for this paper is from Ways. The student papers are from a freshman course I taught during the Winter 1988 semester when I used this sequence.

[10] In her essay, "Stabat Mater," from The Kristeva Reader (1986), Kristeva, in reference to the myth of the Virgin Mother, poses what are for me key questions about the privileges and margins of my working class situation. She asks: "What is there, in the portrayal of the Maternal in general and particularly in its Christian, virginal, one, that reduces social anguish and gratifies a male being; what is there that also satisfies a woman so that a commonality of the sexes is set up, beyond and in spite of their glaring incompatibility and permanent warfare?" (p. 163). As I look into and out from my working class position, the same questions - what gratifies the men and also satisfies the women - seem pertinent. From the outside, the marginalizing of women in that situation is oppressive, yet from the inside it doesn't seem that way and here

is, apparently, something at play that allows satisfaction and the reproduction of the situation. Kristeva allows me to understand this as a complexity that implicates both men and women rather than as a simple attribution of oppressive moves by men.

[11] I am also indebted to Kristeva's writing for the workings of these double-run pages. She makes use of this methodology in "Stabat Mater," and it seems to me useful to juxtapose adjacent conversations that might inform and disrupt each other when one is suspicious, as I am here (and I don't mean to imply that Kristeva is) of the totality of either (or both) texts. This is, then, another form of discursive play, something that is attractive to me.

[12] Foucault (1972) refers to "a slow transformable unity" as "a plastic continuity, the movement of a meaning that is embodied in various representations, images, and metaphors" (p. 150). He says they may be thematic or systematic, explicit or not.

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